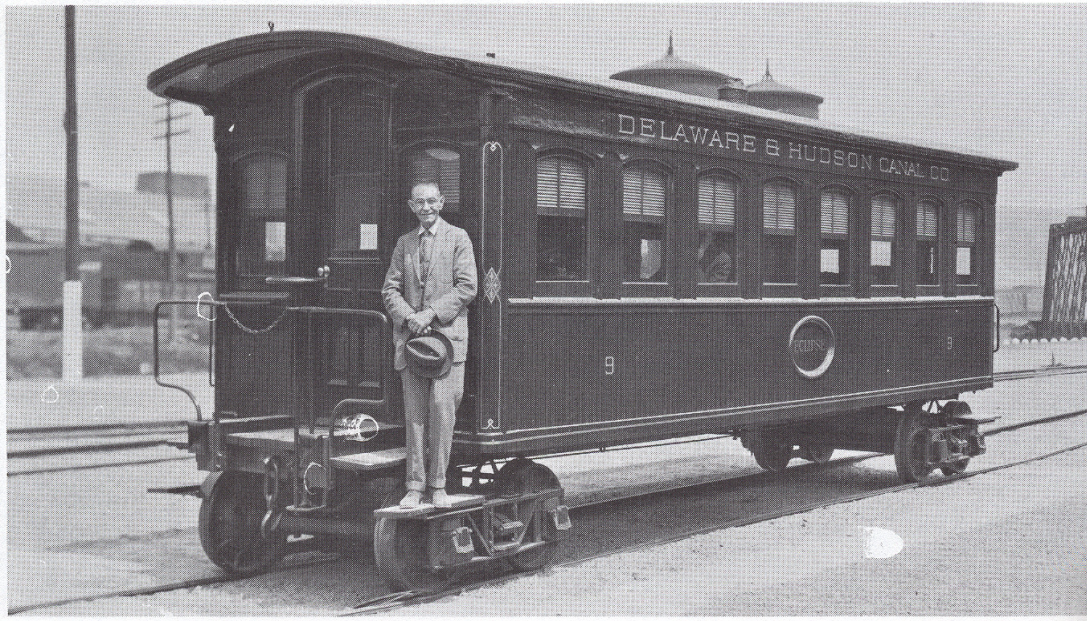


# GRAVITY CARS

## 100 YEARS LATER



BY

Robert F. Stahr, Jr.

This book is dedicated to the people of the Waymart Area Historical Society(WAHS).

I also thank my friends Rod Brown and Cal Jowers for the encouragement and help with the writing of this book.

About the author:

As a resident of North East Pennsylvania the author became very interested in the various gravity railroads in the area. Because of this interest he has walked the entire length of the Delaware & Hudson Gravity Railroad (D&H), and a good portion of the others, e.g.. .. Pennsylvania Coal Company Gravity Railroad (PAC) and the Shohola Glen Gravity Switchback Railroad, just to name a few.

This book is the result of the author's search for the gravity, what became of it and the cars that ran on it. During this time, the author acquired three cars of his own: Car#3, on page 9, a Boxcar, on page 21, and Open-Air Car #43, on page 19. the last of which has been donated to the Waymart Area Historical Society. Collecting Gravity Railroad paraphernalia didn't stop at the cars; in fact, it began with strap rail (which the cars rode on), T-rail, fire bricks, and car parts from Coal cars that were burned.

The author now resides in western North Carolina with his wife Emily, and son Robbie.

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Front Cover picture: Eclipse Car #9 built in 1882 ( D&H collection)

## Gravity Railroad Cars

In this book, you will see what happened to some of the cars after the gravities quit running.

- The Delaware & Hudson Canal Company's Gravity Rail Road, 1829 – 1899, ran between Honesdale and Scranton, Pennsylvania. Some of the train cars were built in their Carbondale shops.
- The Pennsylvania Coal Company's Gravity Rail Road, 1850-1885, ran between Hawley and Pittston, Pennsylvania.
- The Shohola Glenn Gravity Switch back Rail Road, 1885-1910, was passenger service only. It ran from the Erie Station at Shohola Pennsylvania to the Amusement Park, about one mile.

When the D & H Gravity stopped running in 1899, they burned 5,000 coal cars in Carbondale. The boxcars and passenger cars were sold to local people for use as chicken coops, cottages, sheds and office space, etc..

John Booth, who owned the Booth Farm on Route 247 was hired to move the cars. He had a large wagon and eight horses. Most of the cars had the trucks and platforms scrapped when the cars were moved.

There were coal cars, flat cars and boxcars in the D & H freight car line. In passenger service, there were thirty-six Open-Air cars, combination cars, passenger cars, flat cars with seats and railroad workman cars. The Open-Air cars were built about 1877 when passenger service started. All the Open-Air cars have had siding put on each of them, when they were taken off the tracks to be closed in. You can see this in the pictures. The author has broken down the passenger cars into two groups... first, those built before 1877 and then those built after 1877. Two of the cars in this book, car #3 and the combination car were built in about 1867. They had plain woodwork with no canvas ceilings. These cars were shorter with narrow windows. They do not have a date when they were built, but they both have air vents along the top on the sides. These vents have a patent date of 1867 on them.

The cars built after 1877 had wider windows, fancy woodwork and hand painted canvas ceilings and the car name in the oval on the outside. A painted plate on the inside of each door states the month and year the car was built. No two cars had the same canvas ceiling.

The Eclipse Car # 9, built in 1882, belongs to the Wayne County Historical Society in Honesdale Pennsylvania. This car is in their museum.



The car was used as a contractors office until restored in 1925



Inside seating for 20 in Eclipse Car #9







Painted canvas ceiling on Eclipse Car #9



Inside moldings of Eclipse Car #9



Car #10 was built in 1882 and was the gentleman's smoking car. The trucks were on the ground behind the car until scraped in World War II. It had been used as an art studio for many years. The name of the car was written in the oval. The name, which is unknown, is probably under the paint. The car was put here in 1899.



Car #10



Car #10





# 10 on inside of door



Car #10, what is left of canvas ceiling





Inside Car #10



Car #10, Nameplate on door

Car #3 was built in 1867 and is one of the early cars. It is in fair condition and belongs to the author. It is sitting on a hay wagon running gear.



Car #3 Sitting on a hay wagon running gear



Inside Car # 3 - under the interior paint is cherry wood.



Car #13 is in excellent condition. It still has one seat. The vinyl siding covers the peeling paint and the other windows. It has been on this lake since 1899.



Car #13



Door to Car #13

You would not know it, but the following picture shows two cars set side-by-side. They are a home. Let's go inside one of the cars. It was built in November 1889.



Two railroad cars made into a home



Door Plate





Canvas Ceiling



Check out the woodwork!

A nice cottage on a lake? These two cars are set side-by-side. Let's go inside one of the cars, It was built in February 1887.



Cottage made with two railroad cars



Inside car – now used as a bedroom





Canvas Ceiling



Door Plate

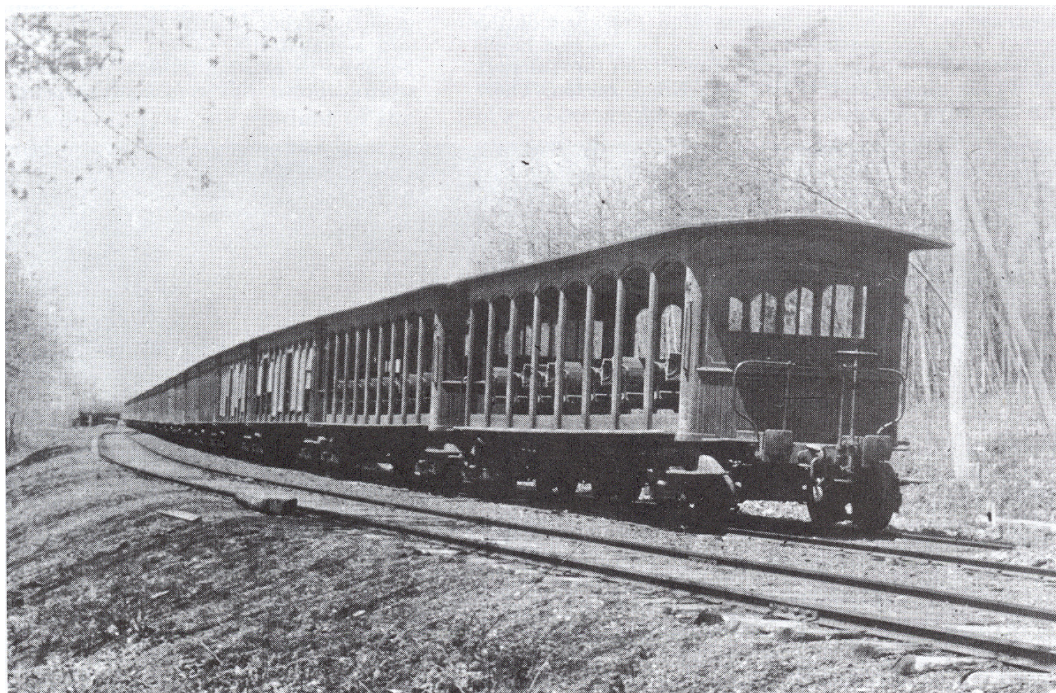
This car is one of the last cars to be built. Notice the corners of the roof slope down. It is a longer car, having nine windows instead of the normal eight. The car was used as a diner in Olyphant. Notice the "Lunch" sign in the window. In the 1950's, it was moved to its present location. It is now part of a home.



This Combination Car is one of the earliest cars. It was built in about 1867. It was a Bunk house for workers on this farm. It was put on the farm in 1899







Picture of 36 Open-Air Cars taken in the late 1890's. (G. M. Best Collection)

This Open-Air car has been on this lake since 1899. Until recently, when it was moved about 100 feet, it had been the front porch to this lake front cottage.



Notice the shed roof added over car roof



Open-Air Car



Inside Car



This Open-Air car is in fair condition. It is a hunting cabin by a stream. It is a longer car having nine openings instead of the normal eight.



Hunting Cabin

Waymart Area Historical Society owns this Open-Air car, which is beyond repair. It had been a cottage on a lake. There was another Open-Air car near this one. It had burned.



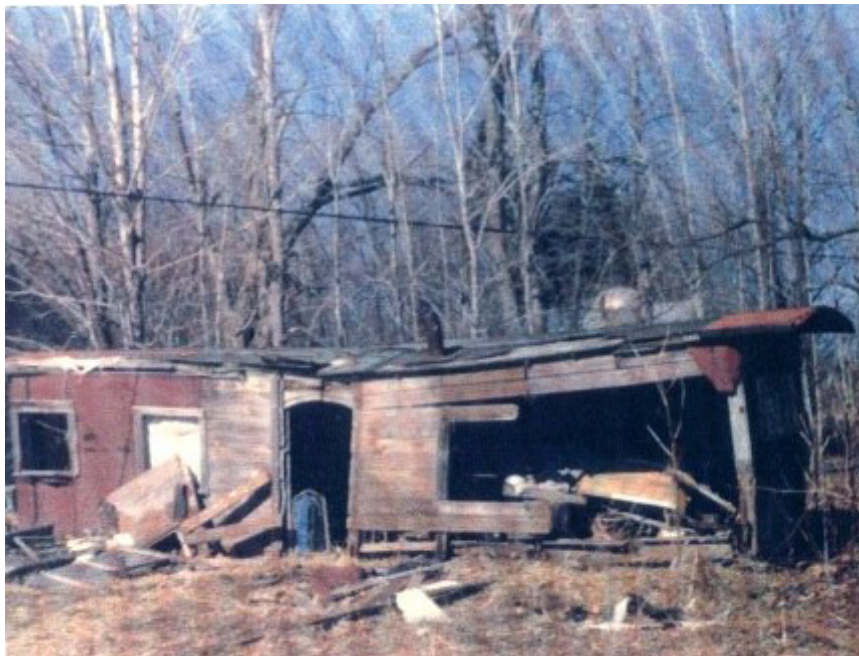
Railroad car once used as a cottage



Open-Air car #43 belongs to the Waymart Area Historical Society. They are rebuilding it and plan to use it in parades. It is a longer car having nine openings instead of the normal eight. It had been used as a chicken coop for many years.



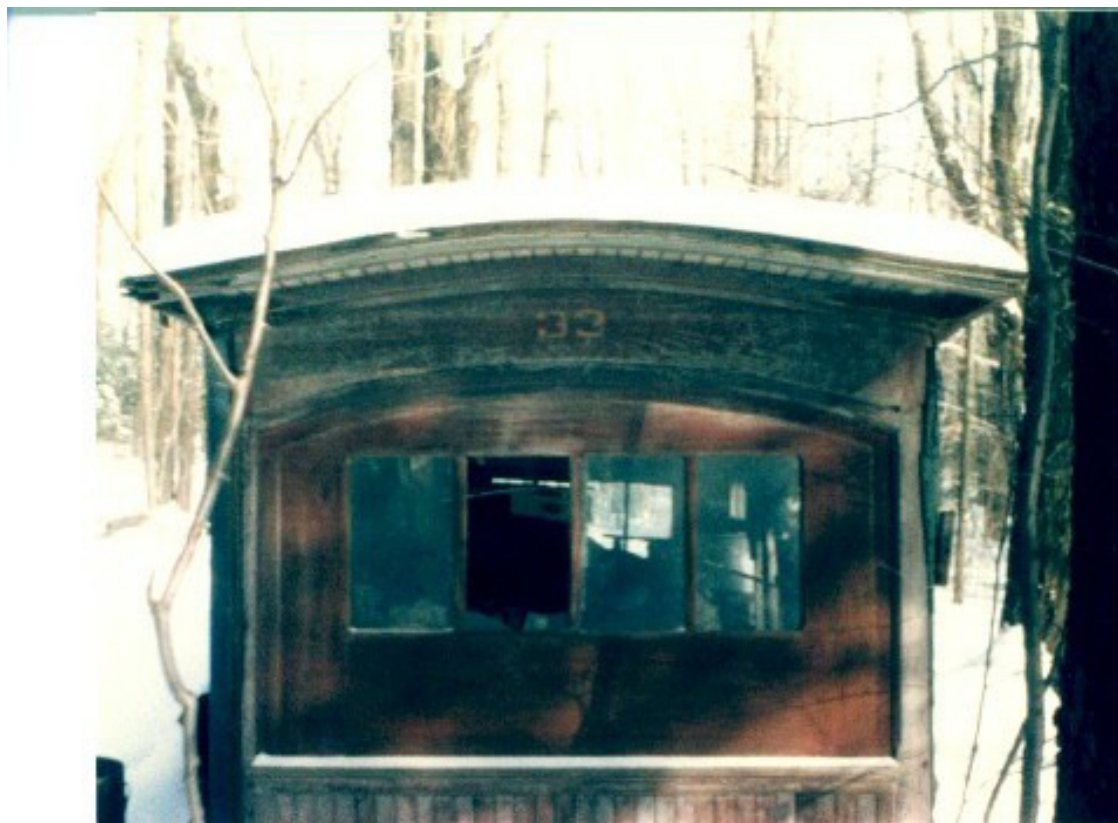
Open-Air Car #43



Car #43 when it was a chicken coop



Open-Air car #33 belongs to the Carbondale Historical Society. It is beyond repair. It had been used as a chicken coop for over 80 years.



Car #33



Car #33

All that is left of this Open-Air car is the frame. The chicken coop burned.



Frame of Open-Air Car

The old boxcar belongs to the author. The roof is on the floor. It is beyond repair.



Box Car beyond repair

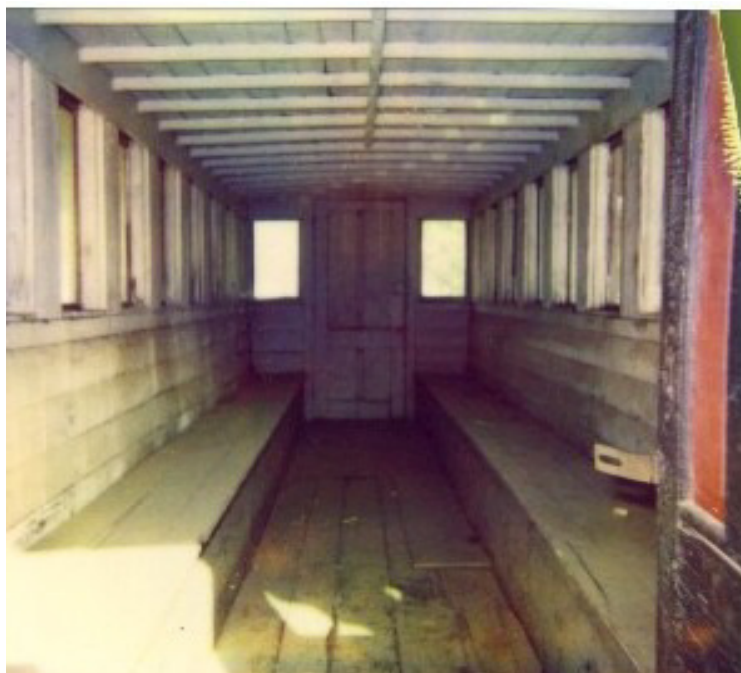


The PAC Co. Gravity ran from 1850 – 1885. When it stopped operations, the coal cars were sold to the D & H and four passenger cars were sold to Shoal Glenn Gravity Switchback. The Shola Glenn Gravity Switchback ran until 1910. Three of these four cars exist today.

This PAC Co. car belongs to the Hawley Library, Hawley Pa. It presently sits very close to the track it originally ran on.



PAC Co. Gravity Car



Inside PAC Co. Gravity Car

This PAC Co. car belongs to the museum at Nay Aug Park in Scranton Pa. It presently sits very close to the track it originally ran on.



PAC Co. Car

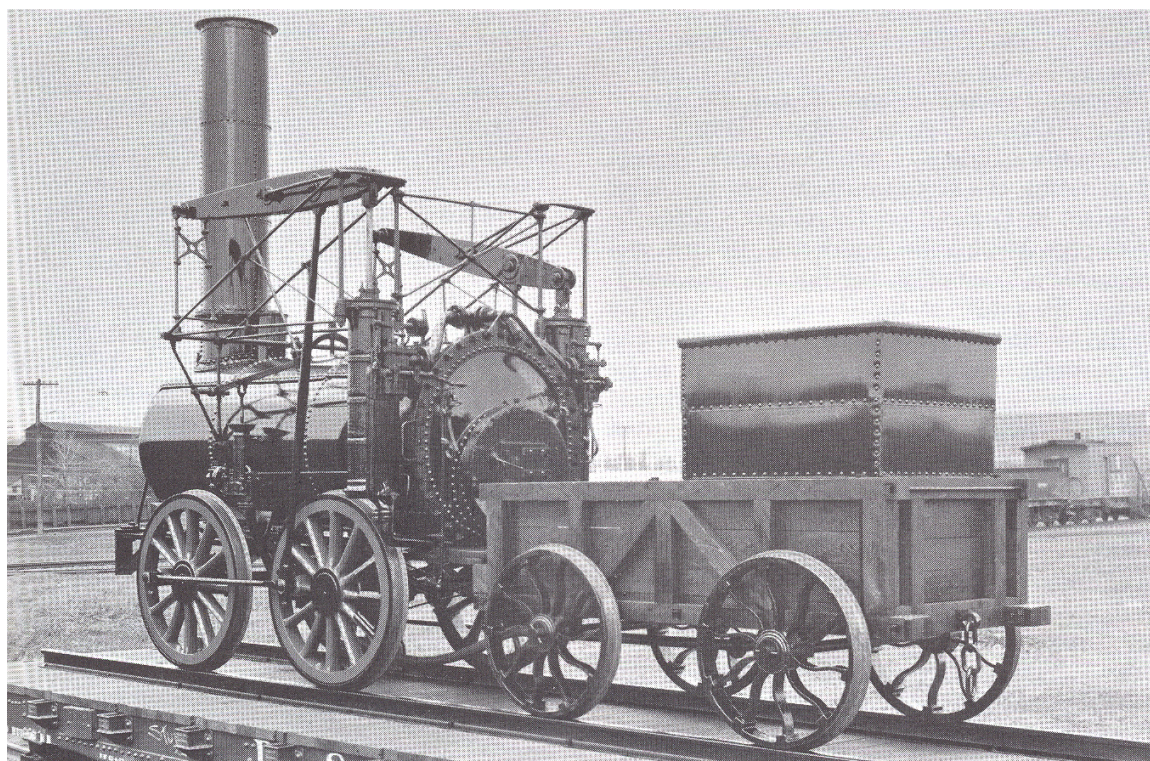
This PAC Co. car had been used as a construction company office trailer. It presently sits very close to the track it originally ran on. It is now a back yard shed.



PAC Co. Car



This exact replica of the Stourbridge Lion was built by shop men at the D&H Colonie shops in 1933 and placed on this flatcar to go to the Century of Progress Exposition at Chicago.  
(D&H Collection)



This replica belongs to the Wayne County Historical Society in Honesdale Pennsylvania. The remains of the original Stourbridge Lion are in the B&O Museum, Baltimore Maryland. The Stourbridge Lion was built in 1829 and was the first steam engine locomotive to run on rails in the United States.